



Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter



New York's 28th District

Niagara County | Winter 2003



Dear Friends,

I was honored to be sworn in last January as the first woman federal representative from Western New York. Getting to know Niagara County and representing its interests in the U.S. House of Representatives has been a true privilege. Last winter, I opened an office in Niagara Falls to serve Niagara County. Please take a moment to read about the work I have been doing in Niagara County and in Washington over the last few months. As always, if you ever need assistance, please contact my office at 716-282-1274 or my web site at www.louise.house.gov.

Sincerely,

*Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress*

Leading the Fight in Congress to Ban Genetic Discrimination

Did you know that there is no overarching federal law preventing employers and health insurers from testing your DNA without your consent, and then using that information to discriminate against you? Rep. Slaughter, a microbiologist with a Master's Degree in

Public Health, has led the fight in the U.S. House to pass legislation to ban genetic discrimination for the past eight years. This issue affects every human being, since we all carry dozens of genetic mutations that can predispose us to certain diseases. In October,

President Bush announced his support for this legislation, and the U.S. Senate passed it unanimously. Rep. Slaughter will continue to press the House leadership to take up and pass this very important bill.



Rep. Slaughter joins U.S. Senators Olympia Snowe (ME), Jim Jeffords (VT), Edward Kennedy (MA), Tom Harkin (IA) and Tom Daschle (SD) to announce Senate passage of legislation to ban genetic discrimination.

Living in Beautiful Niagara County

Rep. Slaughter and her family spent three weeks living in the town of Wilson this summer. She greatly enjoyed spending time along the shores of Lake Ontario while working on behalf of her constituents during the August district work period. Rep. Slaughter visited many local officials, toured local attractions and made many good friends. She hopes to return next summer to enjoy again the beauty of Niagara County.



Lake Ontario.



Rep. Slaughter discusses issues facing first responders with John Cecula of the Lewiston Haz-Mat Department and Jonathan Schultz of the Upper Mountain Volunteer Fire Company.

Supporting Local First Responders

As a senior member of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security, Rep. Slaughter knows how important it is to make sure our first responders—firefighters, police and other emergency workers—have the tools they need to protect our communities. Rep. Slaughter has met repeatedly with local officials in Niagara County to assess points of vulnerability along the Northern Border, and held a forum last spring to bring together dozens of local first responders with officials from the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Bureau of Customs and Border Protection to discuss the unique challenges they face securing the region.

In response to what was said at the forum, Rep. Slaughter helped author the Preparing America to Respond Effectively (PREPARE) Act in September. This important legislation will improve the first responder funding system, reform color-coded threat warnings and improve communications and equipment interoperability.

What's going on in the rest of the 28th Congressional District? To view other county newsletters, call the district office at 716-282-1274 or log on to www.louise.house.gov.

Bringing Congress to Niagara County

As a senior member of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security, Rep. Slaughter invited her colleagues to Niagara Falls State Park in May to discuss the challenges of securing the northern border while protecting trade and tourism.

The bipartisan congressional delegation heard testimony on securing the region from several local

organizations, including the Buffalo Niagara Partnership and the Niagara County Sheriff.

Rep. Slaughter has authored legislation in Congress that would create a Northern Border Security Coordinator at the Department of Homeland Security to facilitate increased security along the U.S./Canadian border.



Rep. Slaughter, joined by Members of Congress and local officials, holds a press conference in Niagara Falls before a hearing to discuss federal efforts on homeland security.

Making a Dream Come True in the Town of Niagara

Preserving green space and building a place for the community to gather has long been a dream for the Town of Niagara. With the help of \$60,000 in federal funds secured by Rep. Slaughter, they broke ground on a new community center and recreation complex in October.

Keeping Niagara County Healthy

In November, Rep. Slaughter announced that she and Senator Clinton had secured \$1 million for the Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center's new emergency/cardiac center. Western New York has some of the highest cardiovascular disease rates in the nation. The new center will help combat this local epidemic, while improving the overall quality of health care in Niagara County.

Cleaning Up Eighteenmile Creek

This year, Rep. Slaughter secured \$100,000 in federal funds to help restore Eighteenmile Creek in Niagara County. Cleaning up the creek will benefit both the environment and the local economy, bolstering the tourism and fishing industries in the area.

In September, she joined Niagara County officials at a groundbreaking for the Eighteenmile Creek Restoration Project.



At the groundbreaking for the Eighteenmile Creek Restoration Project, Rep. Slaughter joins Niagara County Legislator Jim Ward and Town of Newfane Supervisor Eric Krueger to announce she had secured \$100,000 in federal funds for the project.

Keeping and Creating Jobs in Niagara County

Creating new jobs and keeping them in Niagara County is a top priority. Rep. Slaughter has authored legislation to protect manufacturing jobs and to assess the impact that free trade legislation has had on American jobs, and has led the fight to pass a job creation package, protect overtime pay and extend unemployment benefits.

Recently, Rep. Slaughter helped protect jobs at Washington Mills, a factory located in Niagara Falls that produces abrasives. After learning that China was dumping brown aluminum oxide on the American market at below-market value, making it impossible for Washington Mills to

compete, she wrote to the U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) to demand that it intervene. In October, the USITC announced it would place tariffs on these imports, which will help increase production—and create jobs—in Niagara Falls and at other Washington Mills plants.

Family businesses in Western New York play a vital role in creating jobs and boosting the local economy. Rep. Slaughter has hosted several small business and contracting conferences across the region, and intervened to stop the local SBA office in Niagara Falls from closing.



Rep. Slaughter (right) meets with former atomic workers and their families to discuss problems they are having with the compensation program. Some of their stories were later read at a House hearing on the issue.

Defending Western New York's Former Atomic Workers

Rep. Slaughter believes it is shameful that thousands of Western New York's former atomic workers, who served our nation in nuclear facilities during the Cold War, are still waiting to be compensated for injuries they sustained during their service. The federal government set up a program to compensate workers who have developed cancer and other conditions because of exposure to radiation or other contaminants. Unfortunately, that system is failing and thousands of claims remain unpaid.

Rep. Slaughter has been an outspoken advocate of reforming the Energy Employees Occupational

Illness Compensation Program (EEOICP) and has sponsored legislation in Congress to reform the program. She recently helped release a report from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) showing that many of the former atomic sites in Western New York remained contaminated long after the government contracts ended in the 1950's.

Rep. Slaughter will continue to fight for timely compensation for Western New York's former atomic workers and their families. If you or your family needs assistance with an EEOICP claim, call her office at 716-282-1274.



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Supporting the Men and Women of Niagara Falls Airbase

Rep. Slaughter helped bid farewell to Air Force reservists from the 914th Airlift Wing at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station headed to Iraq in March and was again on hand when they arrived back at home in June to thank them for their brave service.

In addition to supporting the troops, she has worked hard to strengthen

the airbase, which employs 700 people and has an economic impact of more than \$125 million in the region. Rep. Slaughter has fought hard to secure funding for the base and has worked extensively with the Niagara Military Affairs Council and the greater community to protect it from the next round of base closures in 2005. Rep. Slaughter has also advocated returning Coast

Guard helicopters to the base to perform patrol missions in the region. In Congress, she is a strong supporter of H.R. 742, which would reduce the age for receiving military retirement pay for guard and reservists from 60 to 55.

Rep. Slaughter discusses the war in Iraq with a member of the 914th Airlift Wing at a farewell event in March.



2004 Congressional Calendars

Rep. Slaughter is delighted to make the beautiful 2004 congressional wall calendar from the U.S. Capitol Historical Society available to interested constituents. For a free calendar, call her office at 716-282-1274 or send an email through www.louise.house.gov/contact.htm, and a copy will be mailed to you.



Supporting the Troops

Rep. Slaughter salutes the brave men and women who are serving our nation in Iraq, Afghanistan and around the world. She continues to speak out on issues of safety and living conditions for our troops overseas and has sent letters to House leadership encouraging them to do everything possible to ensure our troops have proper safety equipment. Other key concerns include providing adequate care of soldiers when they return and reducing age requirements for military retirement pay.

Her office serves as a source of information and assistance to military personnel and their loved ones. Please contact her at 716-282-1274 or visit her web site at www.louise.house.gov.